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ABSTRACT

This study, addressing the effects of current educational reforms on teaching as a profession, investigated both teachers' perceptions of specific elements of legislative reform and the cumulative effect of these elements. A total of 215 elementary and secondary teachers from 12 school districts in North Central Texas participated in the study. Questions addressed in the study were: (1) How did teachers perceive the overall effects of the legislated school reforms? (2) What are the teachers' current perceptions of self, students, and career? (3) How have the teachers' perceptions changed since the 1984 legislation? (4) Are the perceptions of change different for subgroups within the sample? (5) What are teachers' perceptions of the possible and actual benefits of the legislated reforms? (6) What are the teachers' perceptions of the importance of support for reform and the adequacy with which support has been implemented? and (7) What are the implications of the study data for improving the effectiveness of educational reform measures? Teachers' self-image, job satisfaction, emotional support in the work setting, and student attainment of learning goals registered a significant decrease since the implementation of reform legislation. The procedures for moving up the career ladder and the testing of teachers were seen as the most harmful of the 15 reform elements scored. Some suggestions are made for enhancing reform effectiveness. (JD)

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EFFECTS OF LEGISLATED EDUCATIONAL REFORMS ON IN-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SELF, STUDENTS, AND CAREER

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EFFECTS OF LEGISLATED EDUCATIONAL REFORMS ON IN-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SELF, STUDENTS, AND CAREER

In an effort to increase student test scores, weed out "incompetent" teachers, reward better teachers, teach more content and put U.S. production ahead of that in Japan, many states have passed various reforms. All of the above expectations have resulted in demands on students and educators. In Texas, the changes have been wide-spread, affecting curriculum, students, teachers, administrators, school finance, transportation, teacher certification and teacher training. All in all, more than 75 elements of the Texas Education Code were changed by the reform legislation embodied in House Bill 72. (See Appendix A for list of changed elements.)

The changes have been implemented rapidly and with varying results. Newspapers, magazine, and TV stations in Texas have headlined some of the reform features such as the "no pass, no play" rule and teacher testing. The question remains: how has all this affected the perceptions of the average teacher who is in the classroom struggling to teach all the "essential" elements, to take care of mainstreamed students with special needs, to survive frequent teacher evaluations, to average grades every three weeks, and to attend courses and workshops for career ladder credit?

The terms "teacher stress" and "teacher burnout" have become well-known in our current newspapers, magazines, and television

reports. According to the National Education Association (1984), the percentage of teachers who indicated they would not teach again had increased from 10% in 1960 to 36% in 1980. Educational Research Service (1985) surveyed 1,346 teachers and reported that three-fourths of them balked at recommending teaching as a career.

Bynum (1985), the former Commissioner of Education in Texas, said that if the frustration level remains high, if we don't see an easing of the pressures, demands, and difficulties caused by reforms, then probably we will see a "pretty good teacher fallout"; i. e., a significant number of people leaving the profession. The exodus of young, talented, but dissatisfied teachers from the nation's classrooms is becoming a catastrophe for education in the United States. The Metropolitan Life Survey (1986) indicated that skimpy pay, bad working conditions, and lack of respect and prestige are causing teachers to switch to more satisfying and more profitable careers. The majority leaving the profession were male secondary teachers.

D. L. Henderson and K.L. Henderson (1986) report that the reasons given by Texas teachers for leaving the profession have changed since their first study in 1980. At that time, 41% of teachers gave salary as a reason for leaving; in the second study, only 17% named salary. Consistent with other studies, the Henderson data also indicates that reasons for quitting related to working conditions (stress, paperwork, and hassles) more than doubled between 1980 and 1986; increasing from 31% to 68%. The Hendersons also report that 4 in ten teachers are seriously

considering leaving the profession and that almost three-fourths would not recommend teaching as a profession.

The Henderson study examined the broad effects of educational reform on teaching as a profession. The study which we are reporting today addressed the effects of these reforms as perceived by the individual teacher. We investigated both the teachers' perceptions of specific elements of legislative reform and the cumulative effect of these elements.

Several questions were addressed by the study. These included the following:

1. How did teachers perceive the overall effects of the legislated school reforms?
2. What are the teachers' current perceptions of self, students, and career?
3. How have the teachers' perceptions of self, students, and career changed since the 1984 legislation?
4. Are the perceptions of change different for sub-groups within the sample?
5. What are teachers' perceptions of the possible and actual benefits of the legislated reforms?
6. What are the teachers' perceptions of the importance of supports for reform and the adequacy with which those supports have been implemented?
7. What are the implications of the study data for improving the effectiveness of educational reform measures?

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Cluster sampling by schools with voluntary participation within each school was employed. Eight schools (both elementary and secondary) were sampled. Because of concern that there might be a negative bias in the voluntary responses from within the sampled schools, a supplementary sampling of intact classes of in-service teachers currently enrolled in graduate courses at TWU and North Texas was taken. A total of 215 teachers from twelve (12) school districts in North Central Texas participated in the study. (See Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

LEVEL	LOCALE: Urban M	Urban F	Suburban M	Suburban F	Rural M	Rural F	Total M	Total F	Total ALL	Percent of Total
Primary	0	10	1	30	0	9	1	49	50	23.3
Elementary	2	14	3	52	0	5	5	71	76	35.3
Junior High	2	11	1	7	0	6	3	24	27	12.6
Secondary	17	31	1	6	2	5	20	42	62	28.8
TOTAL by Sex	21	66	6	95	2	25	29	186	215	
TOTAL by Locale	87		101		27					
Percent of Total	40.5%		46.9%		12.6%					

In order to detect any systematic bias of the volunteer participants in the sampled schools, their responses were compared

to those from the intact graduate classes. F-tests for homogeneity of variance between the two sample sources were conducted upon a random selection of items from the survey instrument; no significant differences between the two samples were detected. The closest approach to significance was obtained on the variable Current Expectations for Students, which yielded an $F = 2.158$; $p = .143$. It was concluded that no systematic bias existed in the responses from the volunteer sample.

Instrument

The survey instrument consisted of three parts: demographic information, free response questions, and six scales using Likert-type items. (See Appendix B for instrument). Reliability of the instrument was determined by the computation of Cronbach's alpha for each of the six scales in the instrument. The coefficients yielded ranged from .75 ro .89, thus indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

Analysis

The free response items were subjected to content analysis using the Multi-Response Procedure in the SPSSX statistical package. In order to detect perceived changes since 1984, T-tests were performed on the scaled data reflecting perceptions of self, students, and teaching. Significant changes were examined for differences by sub-groups. Perceptions of reform elements and of supports for reform were ranked and examined for inter-subject agreement through calculation of Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance. Multi-linear regression analysis was performed to

determine correlates of teacher perceptions of self, students, and career. All tests of significance were made at the .05 level.

RESULTS

Over-all Effects of Reforms

One of the open-ended questions in the free-response section of the survey instrument requested that the respondents indicate their perception of the overall effect of the legislated school reforms. The responses were categorized as to affective tone and then were tabulated. The overall effects of the legislated reforms was perceived as being negative, with 85% of the responses expressing criticisms or concerns. About 6% of the subjects did indicate "wait and see" and 8.7% indicated a somewhat positive attitude. Most of these optimistic respondents were teaching at the secondary school level.

The flavor of the majority perception of the overall effect of the reform legislation is reflected in the following verbatim quotes from responses to this item:

> "There are times I don't want to tell anyone that I'm a teacher."
>
> "I don't enjoy teaching as much now. I feel stifled and unable to use my creativity."
>
> "Before 1984, I felt challenged and determined to do my best in all situations. Now I feel like a second-class robot -- programmed to spit out the approved curriculum."

"It has made the entire school system worse from top administration to the janitor. Evaluations have caused hard feelings and set teacher against teacher."

In a second open-ended question, teachers were asked specifically to compare their feelings about their role as a teacher before and after the reform legislation. These responses were coded as to specific concerns nominated by the teachers in discussing their roles. Six subjects were deleted from the analysis because they had not been teaching prior to 1984; twenty-one (21) subjects made no response to this item or said "see above". The remaining 188 subjects generated 352 responses. Table 2 displays the frequency data in the categories of concerns nominated by the respondents.

Table 2: Histogram of Concerns Nominated in Free-Response Items

	Nominated Concern	Percent of Responses	Percent of Cases
**********	Teaching as a Career	21.3	39.9
********	Morale of Teachers	15.6	29.3
********	Self-Concept of Teachers	12.5	23.4
*******	Mechanization of Schooling	11.4	21.3
******	Reform Elements	8.8	16.5
******	Stress	8.5	16.0
******	No Time to Teach	8.5	16.0
******	Student Wellbeing	8.2	15.4
****	Adverse Publicity	3.4	6.4
**	Physical Fatigue	1.7	3.2
Totals		Responses = 352	N = 188

* = 2% of Cases nominating concern

The way in which the reform legislation had impacted teaching as a career was a concern for almost half (40%) of the respondents. Morale was a concern for about a third of the respondents while self-concept or self-image was mentioned by almost a quarter of them. Surprisingly, the adverse publicity preceding and accompanying the 1984 legislation was nominated as a concern by only 6% of the subjects.

Current Perceptions of Self, Students, and Teaching

After the free-response questions, the subjects were asked to utilize Likert-type attitude scales to respond to several items as they are currently perceived. The scale ranged from 5-Very High to 1-Very Low. Table 3 presents the ranks of the items in terms of both the mean rating (average of ratings assigned each item) and the mean rank (average of relative rank across items for each subject). Personal Stress was rated as very high; Job Satisfaction and Emotional Support at Work ranked very low. Student-related items (Expectation, Stress, and Learning) were perceived as high to moderate.

The subjects were in basic agreement with the relative rankings of these items as indicated by the significant Kendall Coefficent of Concordance. Both the mean rank and mean rating approaches to ordering the items agree in general, although Personal Stress and Expectations for Students -- which have slightly different mean ratings -- are tied in mean rank.

Table 3: Ranks Within Rating Levels of Teacher Perceptions of Self, Career, and Students under Current Conditions

Rating Level	Mean Rating	Std. Dev.	Mean Rank	Teacher Perceptions
5 - Very High				
	4.24	.916	1.5	Personal Stress, Job-related
	4.20	.813	1.5	Expectations for Students
4 - High				
	3.90	1.00	3	Student Stress
	3.73	1.08	4	Teacher's Self-Image
	3.70	.89	5	Student Learning
3 - Moderate				
	2.99	1.14	6	Job Satisfaction
	2.91	1.19	7	Emotional Support at Work
2 - Low				
1 - Very Low				

Kendall Coefficient of Concordance: W = .2377; p<.0005; N=215

Comparison of Current and Prior to 1984 Perceptions

The teachers were asked also to rate the same seven items as they recall perceiving them prior to the reform legislation in 1984. Perceptions for the two time periods (Today and Prior to 1984) were compared for each item through computation of the T-statistic for dependent samples. Subjects who had not taught prior to 1984 were deleted from the analyses. All seven comparisons yielded significant differences between recalled and current perceptions.

As shown in Figure 1, teacher and student stress and expectations for students are higher today than than they were before the reform legislation. The change between the two periods is considerably smaller -- although still significant -- for student expectations than for the stress variables.

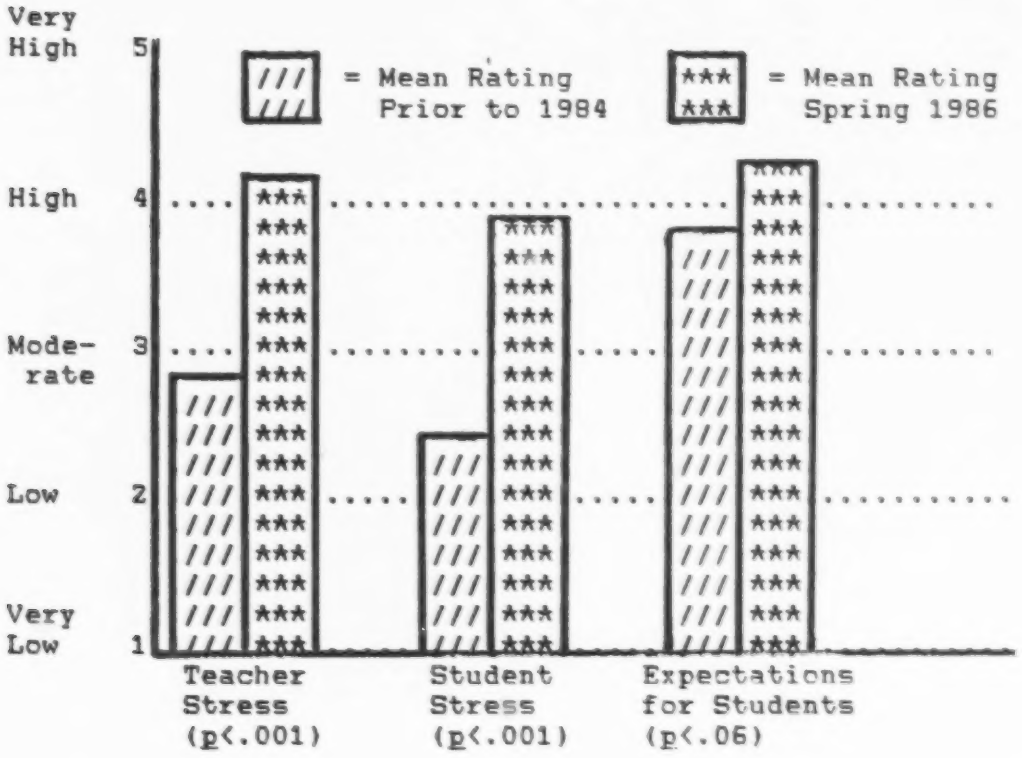

Figure 1: Comparison of Stress and Expectation Levels before and after Educational Reform Legislation in 1984

Similarly, in Figure 2, the change between the two time periods for Student Attainment of Learning Goals is smaller than differences for the other three variables: Teacher's Self- Image, Job Satisfaction, and Emotional Support in the Work Setting. All

four variables, including Attainment of Learning Goals for Students, registered a significant decrease since the reform legislation. The significant decreases in the teachers' self-image and job satisfaction are not surprising when considered in conjunction with the increased expectations for students and the decreases in emotional support and attainment of learning goals. Nor is it suprising that these changes were accompanied by increases in stress for both teachers and students.

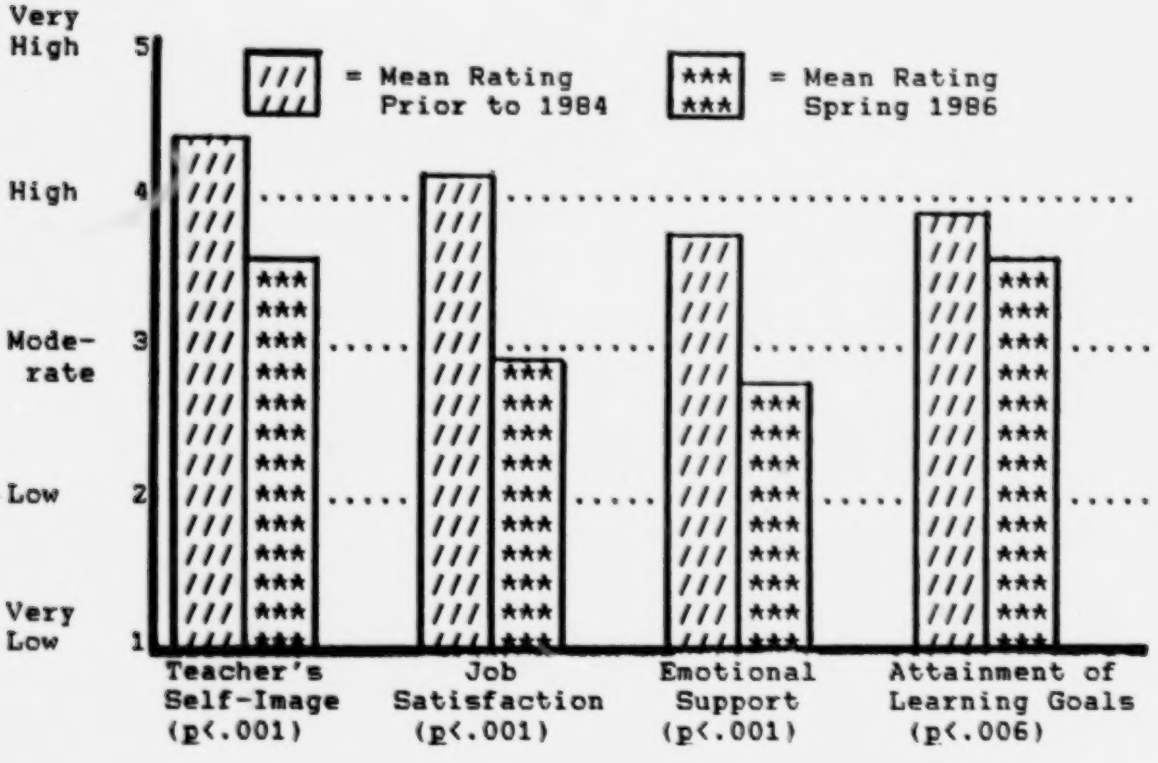

Figure 2: Comparison of Teacher Affect and Student Learning before and after Educational Reform Legislation in 1984

Validation of Recall Data

The changes reported above depend upon recalled perceptions; that is, teachers had to remember, in 1986, how they had felt in 1984 about self, students, and career. This raises the question of the validity of that recall; i.e., did the teachers remember accurately how they felt or were their memories distorted significantly by intervening events during the two-year period.

In one sense this question can be dismissed upon the grounds that accuracy of recall is not pertinent to the problem of the effects of reform. That is, a person's actions are based upon his/her perceptions of the world, regardless of the correspondence of those perceptions to reality as perceived by others (Combs, 1962). Thus, teachers who recall that "teaching was better in 1984, before the reform legislation" will act and feel consonant with that perception, even though the perception may not be reflective of actuality.

On the other hand, validation of the accuracy of the recalled perceptions would provide a firmer basis for drawing implications from the data obtained in the survey. Fortunately, the researchers had on hand data obtained in 1983 from one of the schools in the current survey. The data had been obtained with a questionnaire -- not with the current survey instrument -- but the questionnaire contained several items which assessed issues also addressed in the survey. The same 1983 questionnaire was again administered to that school (School A). Table 4 displays the results of the two administrations of the questionnaire.

Table 4: Comparison of Negative Responses to Educational Issues in 1986 and 1983 by Faculty of School A

NEGATIVE RESPONSES				ITEM
1986		1983		
N	%	%	N	
12	52	22	7	Current academic trends
17	68	56	18	Public's opinion of teachers
13	53	31	10	Funding levels for education
11	44	38	12	Student's academic skills
15	60	41	13	Parental involvement
17	68	34	11	Legislative changes toward education
16	64	56	18	Public school administrators
18	72	31	10	Job satisfaction
17	68	41	13	Choose teaching as career today
25		32		Total N of Respondents

For all nine items, more teachers made negative responses in 1986 than they had in 1983. In general, then, this data validated the direction of the recalled perceptions on the survey form. In fact, prior to the reform legislation in 1984, the teachers in School A had felt better about teaching than they did in 1986.

The next step in the validation of recall perceptions was to determine whether the teachers in this school were representative of the total sample surveyed. Except for "Choose Teaching as a Career Today", all of the issues which were addressed on the questionnaire were also assessed by specific items on the survey instrument. The responses to these survey items by the faculty of School A (N=17) and the responses from a 10% random sample (N=20) of the remaining survey respondents were subjected to F-tests for homogeneity of variance. No significant F-values were obtained,

indicating that the teachers in School A and the total teachers on the survey represented the same population. It was concluded that the direction of recall perception in the survey was validated: teachers had felt better about self, students, and teaching prior to 1984 than they did in 1986.

Sub-Group Differences in Perception of Change

In order to be able to examine sub-group differences in perceptions between the two time periods, change indices were computed for each of the seven items. The change index was computed by subtracting the individual's rating prior to 1984 from his/her rating under current conditions for each item. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test for significanct differences among sub-groups on each change index.

Factors for the ANOVAs were two levels of gender (male, female); three levels of locale (urban, suburban, rural), three levels of school (primary, elementary, secondary), and four levels of teaching experience (3-7, 8-12, 13-18, and 19-35 years). Subjects with less than two years of teaching experience, i.e., subjects who had not taught prior to the reform legislation in 1984, were deleted from all analyses. In order to detect for interaction effects, the analyses were conducted as two-way ANOVA with the factors taken in pairs: Gender X Locale, Gender X School Level, Gender X Teaching Experience; Locale X School Level, Locale X Teaching Experience; and School Level X Teaching Experience.

Significant interaction effects were detected for only two

variables. In both cases, gender interacted with years of teaching experience. Figure 3 displays the first of these cases.

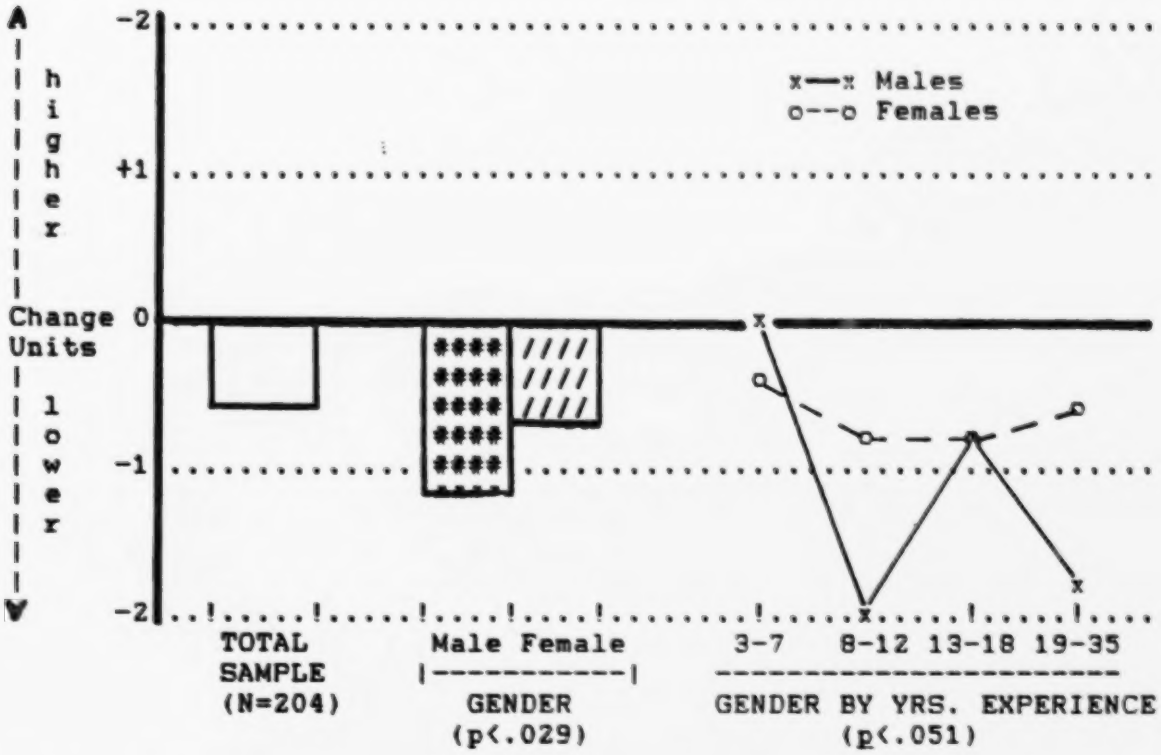

Figure 3: Change in TEACHER'S SELF-IMAGE for Groups Differentiated by Gender and Gender X Experience

Gender was also a main effect for Change in Self-image. Male teachers registered significantly greater decreases in their image of self than did females. It should be noted, however, that the number of male respondents was small (N=29), representing only 13.5% of the population. Although the male respondents were concentrated in the secondary schools, no significant interaction between gender and school level was detected.

The second interaction effect of gender X teaching experience was detected for Change in Student Stress. In addition, a main effect of school level was detected (Figure 4).

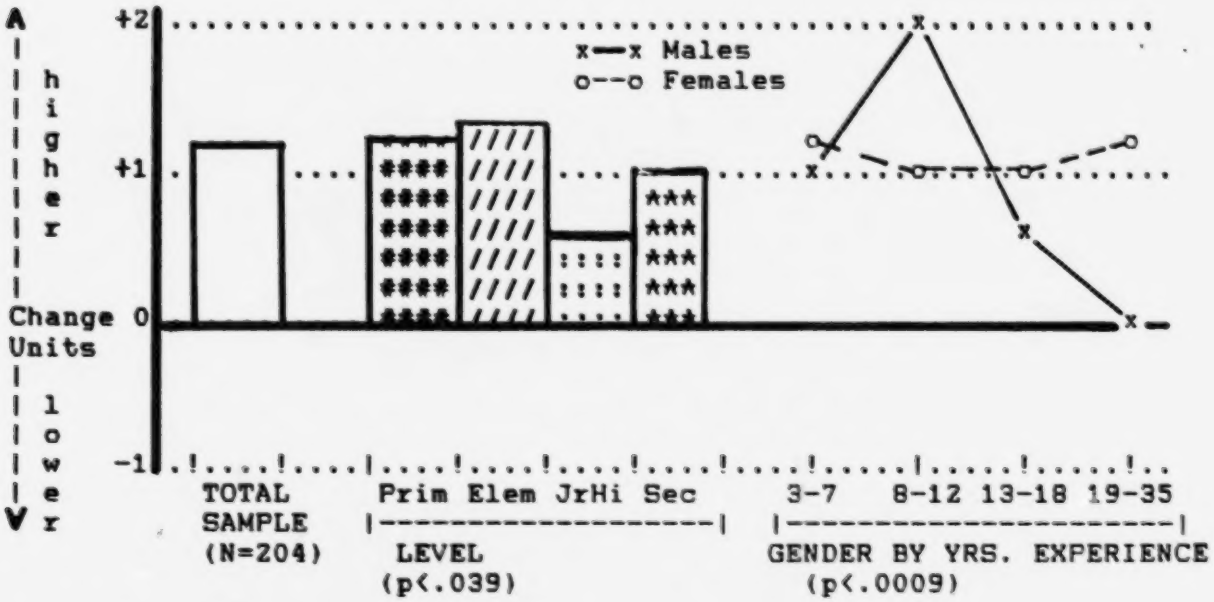

Figure 4: Change in STUDENT STRESS for Groups Differentiated by Level and Gender X Experience

Males with 8-12 years of teaching experience and females with 19-35 years of experience reported significantly greater increases in their perceptions of student stress than did the other gender X experience groups. All female groups and two of the male groups reported changes in student stress of at least one level. Secondary and Junior High teachers perceived less student stress than did primary and elementary teachers. Differences among the groups were statistically significant.

Groups differentiated by gender or by teaching experience yielded significant differences for Change in Expectations for Students. (See Figure 5.) Males and teachers with 13-18 years of experience saw slight to moderate decreases in expectations; all other groups saw slight to moderate increases in expectancies. Males reported the smallest change while teachers with 8-12 years of teaching experience reported the largest change.

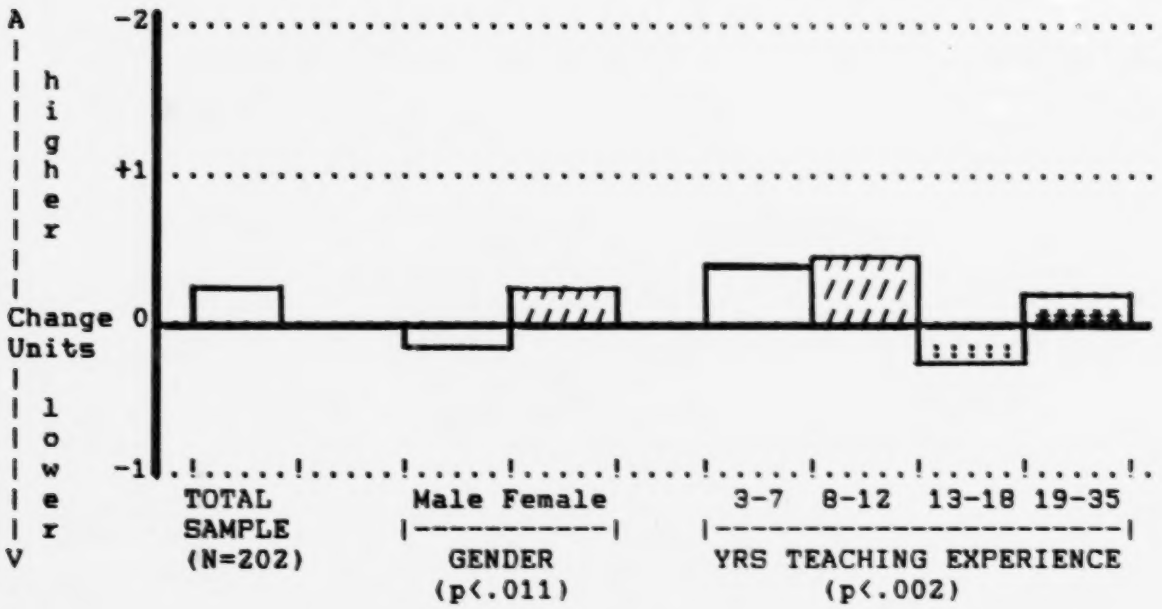

Figure 5: Change in EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS of Groups Differentiated by Gender and Teaching Experience

In spite of (or perhaps because of) increased expectancies for students, all groups perceived decreases in Student Attainment of Learning Goals. (See Figure 6). The greatest decreases were reported by male teachers and teachers in urban settings.

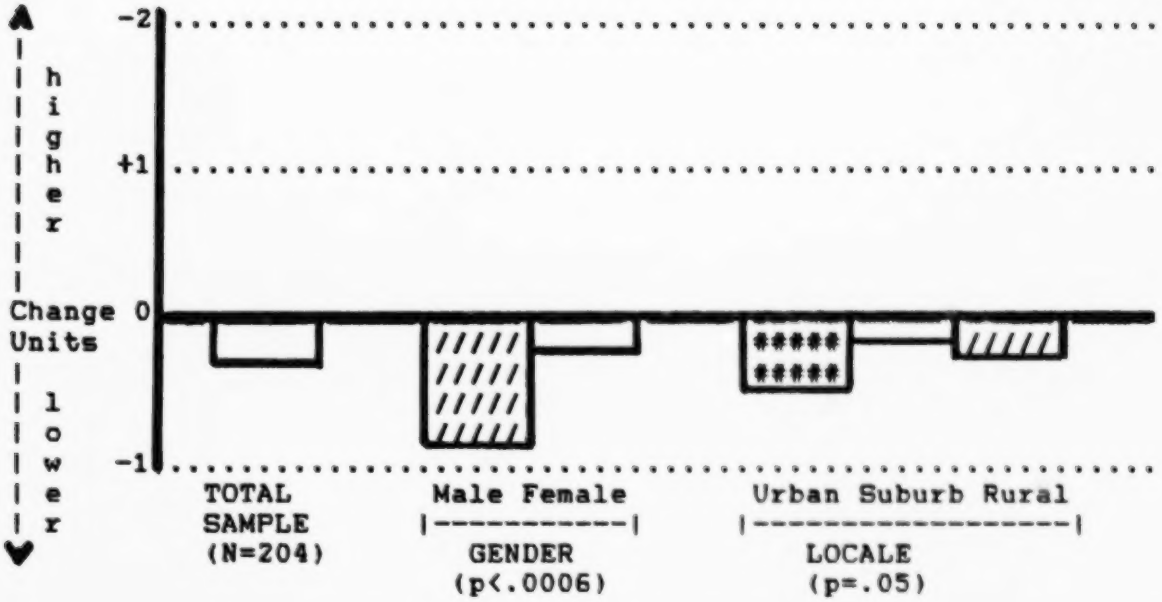

Figure 6: Change in STUDENT ATTAINMENT OF LEARNING GOALS for Groups Differentiated by Gender and Locale

As shown in Figure 7, the longer a teacher has been teaching, the greater the negative change since 1984 in Job Satisfaction. Males have suffered the greater decrease in satisfaction of all the groups except teachers with 19-35 years of experience. Urban teachers report significantly more dissatisfaction with their jobs than do rural or suburban teachers. This may be related to the levels of emotional support available in the various locales.

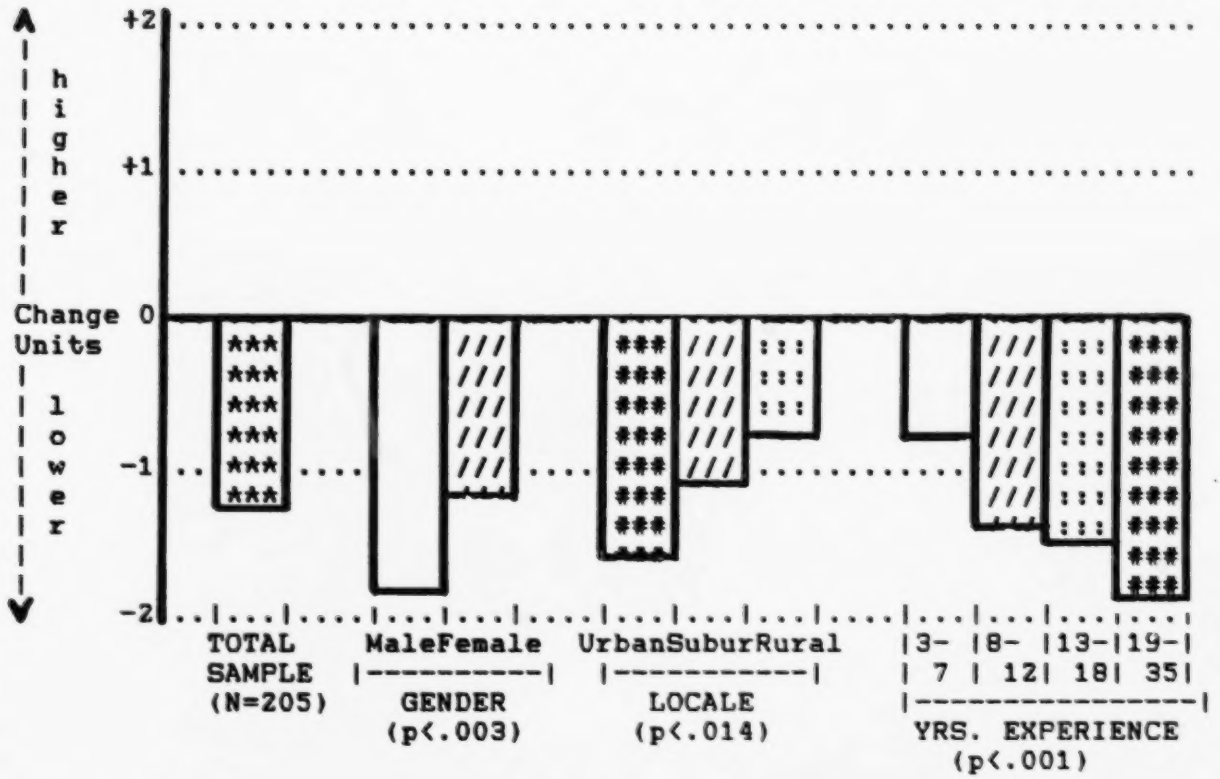

Figure 7: Change in JOB SATISFACTION for Groups Differentiated by Gender, Locale and Experience

Rural teachers reported that there have been only small decreases in the Emotional Support that they receive in their work settings while urban teachers saw the most negative change. As indicated in Figure 8, no single group reported a perception of increased support; the significant variances which were detected among groups were all differences in the degree of negative change perceived. As was the case with Job Satisfaction, the longer a teacher has been working, the larger are the decreases in emotional support which are perceived as having occurred since the

reform legislation. Males also see more negative change in emotional support than females do and faculties of urban schools perceive less emotional support than do faculties of suburban or rural schools.

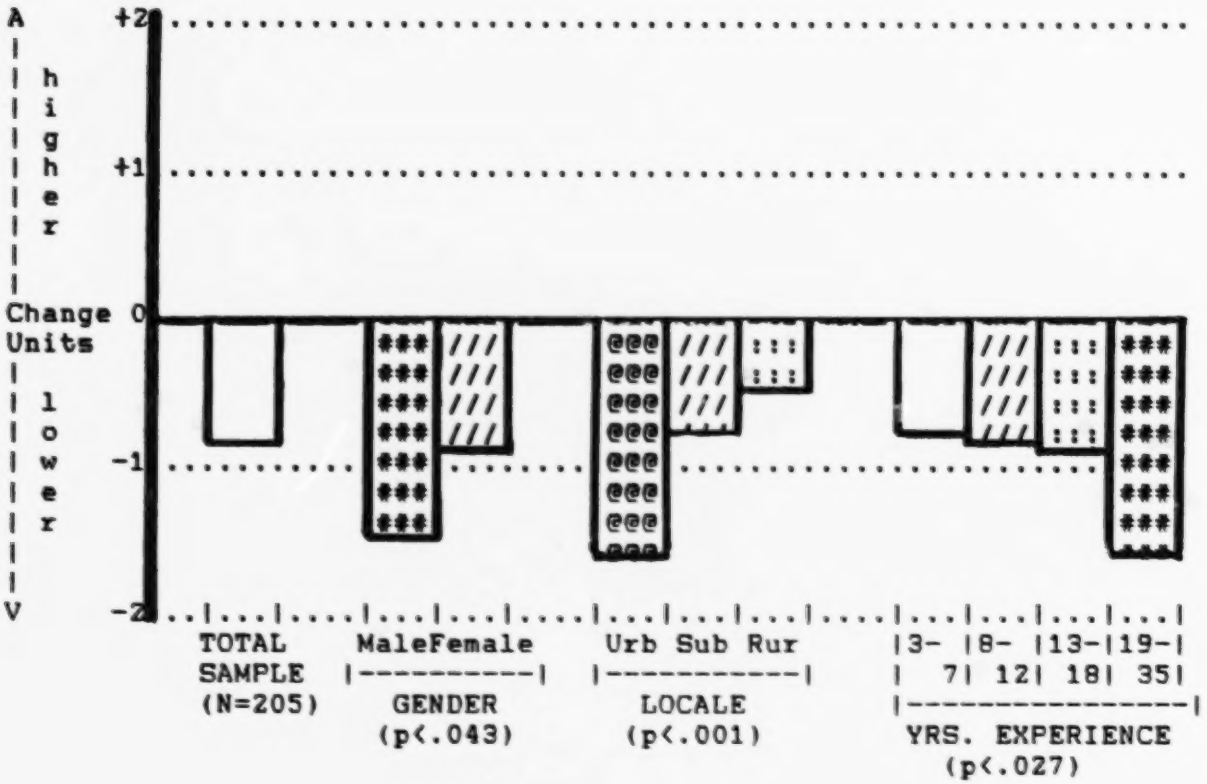

Figure 8: Change in EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AT WORK for Groups Differentiated by Gender, Locale and Experience

No significant differences among groups were found for perceptions of the Teacher's Job-Related Stress. All groups reported mean increases in teacher stress of at least one unit, e.g. moving from "Moderate" to "High" or from "High" to "Very

High". Figure 9 displays the data by teaching level, the only variable which approached significant differences among groups.

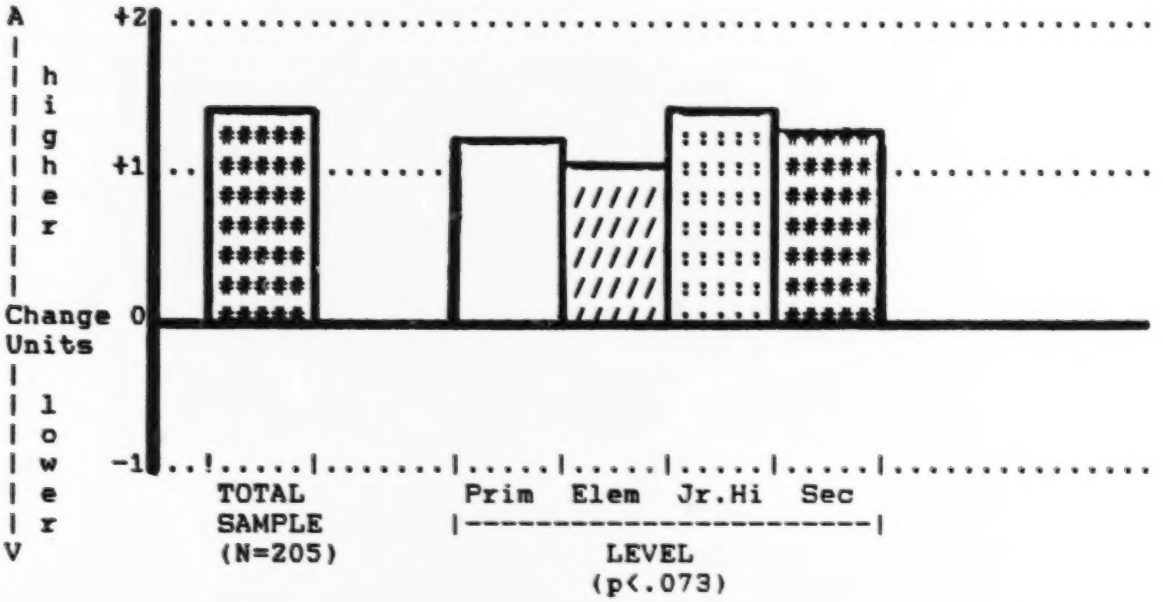

Figure 9: Change in TEACHER'S JOB-RELATED STRESS for Groups Differentiated by Level

Effects of Specific Elements of Legislated Reform

The next section of the questionnaire examined perceptions of the effects of various reform processes or procedures legislated in 1984. Teachers were asked to indicate, for each of 15 items, their perceptions of (a) the anticipated theoretical effectiveness of the reform element and (b) how beneficial the reform element, as it had been implemented, was in actually improving the effectiveness of schools. The rating scale ranged from "5=Very Beneficial" to "1=Very Harmful".

Table 5 orders the perceptions of actual effectivenes by the item's mean rating. Mean rank (average of relative rank across items for each subject) is also indicated.

Table 5: Ranks Within Rating Levels of Beneficience of Reform Elements As Currently Implemented

Rating Level	Mean Rating	Std. Dev.	Mean Rank	Reform Element
5 - Very Beneficial				
4 - Beneficial				
	3.74	.95	1	Decreased Class-size
	3.22	.92	2	No-pass No-play Rule
	3.21	.91	3	Teacher Input to Education Decisions
	3.18	1.04	5	Essential Elements in Curriculum
	3.17	.89	4	State-wide Achievement Testing
	3.09	.93	6	Five Days Absent = Failure
	3.09	.97	7	Frequent Numerical Grades
	3.01	.97	9	Instructional Decisions Based on Tests
3 - No Change				
	2.99	.99	8	Homogeneous Pacing of Instruction
	2.95	.99	10	Remedial Tutoring
	2.85	1.13	11	Evaluative Observation of Teachers
	2.58	.84	12	Increased Testing of Students
	2.25	1.00	14	Schools Compared on Test Scores
	2.24	1.21	13	Career Ladder for Teachers
2 - Harmful				
	1.92	1.05	15	TECAT Testing of Teachers
1 - Very Harmful				

Kendall Coefficient of Concordance: W = .1988; p<.001; N=189

Five items were perceived as being somewhat beneficial although no item was seen as being highly beneficial. Among the five items which were considered helpful in improving the effectiveness of schools, Decreased Class-size was seen as the most helpful, followed in order by the "No pass, no play" Rule, Teacher Input to Educational Decisions, inclusion of the Essential Elements in the Curriculum, and State-wide Achievement Testing. Several elements were perceived as having changed very little or as having only small effects; these included Frequent Numerical Grades, the 5-day Rule, and Instructional Decisions Based on Tests. The effect of most of the remaining items was seen as somewhere between "No change" and "Harmful." The procedures for a Career Ladder and Comparing Schools on Test Scores were rated as being very close to harmful. The item considered to be the <u>most</u> harmful of all the items was TECAT Testing of Teachers.

A comparison of the anticipated theoretical benefits from the reform elements with the benefits as the elements are currently implemented is shown in Table 6. The items are ordered according to the mean rating of theoretical benefits. As evidenced in the first two columns of the table, the perceived <u>actual</u> benefit from the reform elements was less for every item than the anticipated <u>theoretical</u> benefit. The second two columns present the relative effectiveness of the items in terms of the mean ranking.

Table 6: Comparison of THEORETICAL Beneficence from Reform Elements vs. Benefits as CURRENTLY Implemented

PERCEIVED BENEFICIENCE				
Mean Rating		Mean Ranking		Reform Element
As Current	In Theory	As Current	In Theory	
3.74	4.69	1	1	Decreased Class-size
3.21	4.40	3	2	Teacher Input to Education Decisions
2.95	4.08	10	3	Remedial Tutoring
3.09	4.04	6	4	Rule: Five Days Absent = Failure
3.18	4.01	5	5	Essential Elements in Curriculum
3.22	3.96	2	6	No-pass No-play Rule
2.85	3.83	11	7	Evaluative Observation of Teachers
3.17	3.76	4	8	State-wide Achievement Testing
3.01	3.63	7	10	Frequent Numerical Grades
3.01	3.611	9	9	Instructional Decisions Based on Tests
2.99	3.58	8	11	Homogeneous Pacing of Instruction
2.24	3.50	13	12	Career Ladder for Teachers
2.58	2.99	12	14	Increased Testing of Students
1.92	2.89	15	13	TECAT Testing of Teachers
2.25	2.76	14	15	Schools Compared on Test Scores

RATING LEVELS: 5 - Very Beneficial 2 - Harmful
4 - Beneficial 1 - Very Harmful
3 - No Change/No Difference

Decreased Class-size and Teacher Input to Educational Decision-making which the teachers perceived as being the first and second in terms of theoretical benefits were also perceived as being very effective in terms of actual benefits, ranking 1st and 3rd in terms of benefits as currently implemented. Remedial Tutoring, which in theory was expected to be the third most

beneficial element, was ranked as 10th in actual benefits while the "No pass No-play" rule, which had been expected to be the 6th most effective reform element, placed second in terms of actual benefits as implemented. State-wide Achievement Testing, anticipated to be the 8th most effective element, was ranked as fourth in perceived benefits. Homogeneous pacing of instruction, which had been ranked near the bottom of the list (11th place) in terms of expected benefits, received 8th-place ranking for benefits in practice. Surprisingly, TECAT testing was not ranked 15th for theoretical benefits; the teachers ranked it 13th in terms of potential benefits, placing it above Increased Testing of Students (14th place) and Schools Compared on Test Scores (15th).

Adequacy of Supports for Implementation of Reform

The final section of the instrument assessed how effective various aspects of potential supports for carrying out educational reform were perceived to be. The teachers were asked to rate each of 11 aspects of support in terms of (a) how well it had been implemented and (b) how important it was for making reform more effective. The rating scale for adequacy of implementation ranged from 5 = Very Well to 1 = Very Poorly while the scale for importance in effective reform ranged from 5 = Very Important to 1 = Very Unimportant.

Table 7 presents the rank order of adequacy of implementation of supports for the current reform efforts. Only one item, Administrative/Supervisor Support, was seen as being more than moderately adequate. Among the remaining items, Administrative

Equity was perceived as having been implemented in a fashion that was most nearly adequate. At the other end of the scale, Educator Input to State-level Policy was seen as approaching "Poorly".

Table 7: Ranks Within Rating Levels for Adequacy of Implementation of Supports for Current Reform Efforts

Rating Level	Mean Rating	Std. Dev.	Mean Rank	Type of Support for Reform
5 - Very Well				
4 - Fairly Well				
	3.23	1.23	1	Administrator/Supervisor Support
3 - Moderately				
	2.94	.96	2	Administrative Equity
	2.80	1.11	3	Concern for Individual Differences
	2.80	1.05	4	Parent Support for Student Achievement
	2.79	1.04	5	Para-professional Aid
	2.62	1.10	6	Publicity for Successes
	2.59	1.14	7	Community Respect for Teachers
	2.53	1.19	8	Adequate Funding
	2.46	1.24	9	Team Spirit, Not Peer Competition
	2.45	1.02	10	Teacher Input to Implementation Decisions
	2.19	1.09	11	Educator Input to State-level Policy
2 - Poorly				
1 - Very Poorly				

Kendall Coefficient of Concordance: W = .1020; p<.001; N=188

A comparison of the adequacy of implementation of the supports for reform efforts with the perceived importance of each element in making reform more effective is presented in Table 8.

All supports for reform were seen as being important to the success of reform efforts, with the lowest item, Para-professional Aid, being rated 4.04.

Table 8: Comparison of THEORETICAL Importance of Supports for Reform Efforts vs. ADEQUACY as Currently Implemented

Mean Rating		Mean Ranking		Support for Reform Efforts
As Current	In Theory	As Current	In Theory	
2.80	4.83	4	1	Parent Support for Student Achievement
2.59	4.79	7	2	Community Respect for Teachers
3.23	4.72	1	3	Adminstrator/Supervisor Support
2.19	4.67	11	4	Educator Input to State Policy
2.53	4.67	8	6	Adequate Funding
2.46	4.63	9	5	Team Spirit, not Peer Competition
2.45	4.61	10	7	Teacher Input to Implementation Decisions
2.80	4.60	3	8	Concern for Individual Differences
2.62	4.50	6	9	Publicity for Successes
2.94	4.11	2	10	Administrative Equity
2.79	4.04	5	11	Para-professional Aid

RATING LEVELS: 5 - Very Important/Well 2 - Unimportant/Poorly
4 - Important/Fairly Well 1 - Very Unimportant/Poorly
3 - No Opinion/Moderately

Parent Support for Student Achievement was perceived as the most important to the success of reform elements but ranked 4th in terms of adequacy of implementation; similarly, Community Respect for Teachers was perceived as being highly important (2nd ranking) but placed 7th in terms of adequacy. Administrator/Supervisor Support was placed third in importance but achieved 1st-place in

terms of adequacy of implementation while Administrative Equity -- next to the bottom of the list in terms of perceived importance for the success of reform efforts -- was perceived in 2nd place as implemented. Educator Input to State Policy was seen as very important to the success of educational reform but ranked at the bottom of the list in terms of how adequately this support element had been implemented.

Elements of Reform and Aspects of Support as Related to Current Perceptions of Self, Career, and Students

In an effort to assess the relative importance of various reform elements and support processes upon the teachers' perceptions, multi-linear regression analysis was conducted. All 15 reform elements (listed in Table 5) and all 11 supports for reform efforts (listed in Table 7) were entered as possible predictor variables. Seven analyses were conducted: one for each of the perceptions of self, career, and students listed in Table 3.

For the Teacher's Self-image, six of the 26 potential predictors entered the regression equation, resulting in a multiple correlation coefficient of .59; $p<.00005$. (See Table 9.) According to this analysis, smaller decreases in the teacher's self-image were associated with more positive perceptions of benefits from current implementation of numerical grade reports, inclusion of essential elements in the curriculum, the comparison of schools on test scores, and reduced class size. Self-Image was

also directly related to how adequate had been the implementation of two supports for reform; i. e., publicity for successes and community respect for teachers. The interpretation of this result seems to be that in those schools where implementation proceeded smoothly and benefits were apparent, teacher self-image suffered less than in schools without successes to publicize.

Table 9: Correlates of Teacher Perceptions of Self and Career indicated by Multilinear Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable	MCR	Variables Entering Equation (in order of Entry)	Simple r	BETA
Teacher's Self-Image	.584**	Frequent Numerical Grade Reports	.36	.242
		Publicity for Successes	.23	.198
		Essential Elements in Curriculum	.27	.180
		Schools Compared on Test Scores	.21	.126
		Community Respect for Teachers	.26	.112
		Reduction of Class-Size	.16	.104
Job Satisfaction	.572**	Frequent Numerical Grade Reports	.39	.289
		Decreased Class-size	.36	.245
		Team Spirit, not Peer Competition	.28	.231
		Publicity for Successes	.18	.181
		Teacher Input to Implementation	.30	.027
Emotional Support in Work-Setting	.592**	Adminstrator/Supervisor Support	.44	.256
		Teacher Input to Education Decisions	.39	.209
		Homogeneous Pacing of Instruction	.28	.127
		Team Spirit, not Peer Competition	.33	.143
		Remedial Tutoring	.22	.141
		Reduction of Class Size	.31	.095
Job-related Stress	.394*	Community Respect for Teachers	-.28	-.195
		Evaluative Observation of Teachers	-.21	-.164
		Team Spirit, not Peer Competition	-.25	-.147
		Frequent Numerical Grade Reports	-.17	-.130
		Increased Testing of Students	-.21	-.096
		Essential Elements in Curriculum	.07	.047

*p<.002
**p<.0005

The teacher's Job Satisfaction was significantly (MCR =.58; p<.0005) predicted by a sub-set of the variables. The lack of benefits from the requirements for frequent numerical grade reports and from the failure to reduce class size as promised, the lowered team spirit due to peer competition (for placement on the career ladder), and the failure to secure teacher input to implementation decisions all contributed to making teaching a less satisfying job. The adequacy with which successes were publicized, however, was positively related to increased job satisfaction.

The regression equation for the dependent variable, Emotional Support in Work Setting, yielded an MCR of .59, which as significant at .0005. Support from administrators and supervisors was the variable most strongly related (r = .44) to the degree of perceived emotional support. The lack of team spirit and failure to secure teacher input to educational decision-making worked together to lessen available emotional support. Perceptions that homogeneous pacing, remedial tutoring, and reduced class size had yielded only slight benefits also were associated with lack of emotional support.

The teacher's Job-related Stress also was significantly related to six of the predictor variables. The lack of adequate support for reform, particularly in terms of lessened team spirit among colleagues and lowered community respect for teachers, was associated with higher degrees of perceived stress. Higher stress levels also were related to the failure to perceive benefits

resulting from reform elements such as evaluative observation of teachers, frequent numerical grade reports, and increased testing of students. Conversely, the more beneficial the perception of essential elements in the curriculum, the higher the stress level. It should be noted, however, that the prediction equation accounted for only a small amount of variance (MCR=.39; $p<.002$), indicating that other factors, unassessed in this study, were also affecting teacher stress.

In general, although attaining significance, the multilinear regression analyses of the three variables assessing teachers' student-related perceptions did not yield as powerful prediction equations as for the teacher-related variables. Table 10 presents the results of the regressions for the student-related variables.

Table 10: Correlates of Teacher Perceptions of Students indicated by Multilinear Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable	MCR	Variables Entering Equation (in order of Entry)	Simple r	BETA
Student Stress	.362*	Para-professional Aid	.14	.268
		Reduction of Class Size	-.09	-.229
		No-pass, No-play Rule	-.05	-.147
		Tests Used in Instruction Decision	-.07	-.109
Expectations for Students	.271*	Parental Support for Achievement	.24	.212
		Reduction of Class Size	.17	.140
		Frequent Numerical Grade Reports	-.04	-.002
Attainment of Learning Goals for Students	.380*	Teacher Input to Education Decisions	.30	.291
		Team Spirit, not Peer Competition	.19	.148
		Remedial Tutoring	.23	.123
		Frequent Numerical Grade Reports	.17	.07

*$p<.0009$

Increased Student Stress was related to poor benefits from the "No-pass No-play" rule, reductions in class size, and the use of test scores for instruction decision-making. Support by paraprofessionals also was perceived as increasing student stress.

The level of Expectations for Students was most strongly associated (r = .26) with the degree of parental support for student achievement. Perceived benefits from reduced class size and the provision of frequent numerical grade supports were also related to the expectations for students, perhaps because these two factors helped teachers set more appropriate goals.

The strongest association with the Attainment of Learning Goals for Students was teacher input to the making of educational decisions. This association was enhanced by cooperative team spirit among teachers. As would be expected, student learning was also supported by benefits from remedial tutoring and from frequent numerical grade reports.

Summary of Results

The overall effects of the legislated reforms are perceived to be negative. This was the same for all groups whether differentiated by grade level, gender, years of experience, or locale. The respondents rated personal stress as very high and job satisfaction as very low. Emotional support at work also was rated low. Teachers' self-image, job satisfaction, emotional support in the work setting and student attainment of learning

goals registered a significant decrease since the implementation of reform legislation. Males reported significantly greater decreases in their perceptions of self and of student learning than did females. Male teachers also had decreased expectations for students. The longer a teacher has been teaching, the greater the negative change since 1984 in job satisfaction and in emotional support at work. Urban teachers perceive significantly less support at work and lower job satisfaction than do rural or suburban teachers; urban teachers also see greater negative changes in student attainment of learning goals.

With higher expectations for students and negative perceptions of increased stress for students and teachers, lowered attainment of learning goals, decreased self-image and lessened job satisfaction, it is unfortunate that all groups reported a decrease in emotional support at work. The procedures for moving up the career ladder and the testing of teachers were seen as the most harmful of the 15 reform elements scored. The lowest rating for adequacy of implementation was assigned to educator input to state-level policy. The necessity for frequent numerical grade reports and the lack of team spirit due to peer competition for placement on the career ladder were significantly related to decreased job satisfaction, lessened emotional support at work, and to the increase in job-related stress.

This dismal picture might best be summarized by one teacher's description of the over-all effects brought about by the various reforms: "YUCKY, YUCKY, ICKY-POO !!" But the same data that

paints this portrait of decline in teacher morale and teacher effectiveness also offers clues to ways of making educational reform efforts more effective.

ENHANCEMENT OF REFORM EFFECTIVENESS

A professional has been defined as one who has a systematized body of knowledge which can be applied to provide services that (a) yield replicable and predictable results, (b) can be adjusted to individual clients through decision-making and creative processes, and (c) have accountability provided through self-evaluation. Unfortunately, the process of educational reform in Texas is perceived by teachers as denying them many of the functions of a professional. They feel that they have largely been left out of decision-making processes, that they are not free to adjust the delivery of services to the individual student because of such reform elements as the 5-day rule and homogeneous pacing, that they have been handed a body of knowledge (the essential elements) to deliver, and that accountability has been taken out of their hands and replaced with a teacher-appraisal system, requirements for frequent numerical grade reports, and a state test of student achievement. This denial of their professionalism is reflected in the decreases in self-image and job satisfaction reported in the data above.

If we, as teacher educators, are to help teachers through the current rash of educational reforms, we need to support actively any measures which will restore the teacher's image of self as a productive professional. Furthermore, we must try to help

teachers gain the supports they need to function effectively under the new demands and constraints of the reform legislation. The data in this study clearly indicate the need to...

1. Increase the ability of administrators and supervisors to provide support to teachers,

2. Involve parents in supporting their children's achievement,

3. Increase the involvement of teachers in educational decision making,

4. Provide teachers with skills and/or facilities (such as computers) for managing the paper-work and increased information flow from testing, remedial tutoring, para-professional involvement, and frequent numerical grade reports,

5. Ensure that teachers have replicable and predictable skills for helping students attain learning goals,

6. Encourage peer cooperation among teachers by helping them develop interpersonal skills and teaching methodologies which enable or capitalize upon such cooperation, and

7. Provide the resources and conditions, such as paraprofessionals and reduced class size, which will enable teachers to function productively.

Finally, we must take the responsibility for assessing the effects of reform upon the teachers we have graduated. The data we collect must be provided to those persons with the power to adjust the processes and procedures of educational reform so that our mutual goal of excellence in education can be achieved.

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APPENDIX A

Parts of the Texas Education Code Changed by House Bill 72

Curriculum and Special Programs

Bilingual Education
Special Language Programs
Bilingual Summer School Programs
Chapter 75 Curriculum Revisions
Master of Chapter 75 Essential Elements
Gifted and Talented Programs
Kindergarten Education
PreKindergarten Education
Remedial and Compensatory Instruction
Tutorial Programs
Driver Education Programs
School - Community Guidance Centers
Dyslexia and Related Disorders: Screening, Treatment, and Inservice Education
Learning Disabled Eligibility Criteria
Qualifications for providing Spech Therapy Services
Support for Students Enrolled in the Texas School for the Blind or Texas School for the Deaf

Students

Absences
Compulsory Attendance
Advanced Placement Examinations
Assessment of Basic Skills and Compensatory Education
Discipline Management
Extracurricular Activities
Suspension of Handicapped Students from Extracurricular Activities
Promotion and Alternatives to Social Promotion
General Education Development

Teachers and Administrators

Career Ladder
Appraisal of Certified Personnel
Advanced Academic Training
Alternative Teacher Education
Testing of Teachers for Initial and Continuing Certification
Fees for Teacher Certification
Noncertified Instructor's Permit
Minimum Teaching Duties
Planning and Preparation Time
Paperwork Reduction
Duty - Free Lunch
Prohibited Penalties Based on Teacher Absence for Religious Observance
Teacher Training for Signs of Abuse or Neglect

School Finance

Student Attendance Accounting for State Funding Purposes
Basic Allotment
Price Differential Index
Sparsity Adjustment
Small District Adjustment
Education Improvement and Career Ladder Allotment
Special Education Funding
Vocational Education Allotment
Compensatory Education Allotment
Bilingual Education Allotment
Determination of School District Property Values
Local Share of Program Cost
Experienced Teacher Allotment
Enrichment Equalization Allotment
Equalization Transition
Distribution of Foundation School Fund
Foundation Payments
Available School Fund
Effect of Lost State Aid on Tax Increases
Texas Public Education Compensation Plan
Teacher Retirement System Contribution Based on Compensation Above Statutory Minimum
Tuition for Education Outside District
Finance Studies

Transportation

Transportation
County Unit Transportation System
Contract with Transportation Company or System
Operation of School Buses
Violation of School Bus Passing Law
School Bus Safety Equipment
School Bus Driver Training

Miscellaneous

Training School Board Members
Student/Teacher Ratios: Class Size
Accreditation
School District Annual Performance Report
Operation of Schools, Inservice and Preparation
Regional Education Service Centers
General Research Studies

APPENDIX B

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

r Colleague,

Since classroom teachers are responsible for implementing the educational reforms dated by the Texas Legislature, it is important to assess your perceptions of the ectiveness of this effort. Please take a few minutes from your busy schedule to share r opinions of these changes. Your responses should not be labeled with your name or ool as our report will not identify results by person or school.

Thank you for your cooperation in this evaluation.

June H. Buhler
Dr. June Buhler
North Texas State University

Flora Roebuck
Dr. Flora Roebuck
Texas Woman's University

ase tell us about yourself: ___Male ___Female No. Years Teaching Experience: _____
r Teaching Level: ___ K-Primary ___ Elementary ___Jr. High ___Secondary

How have the educational reforms undertaken in the state of Texas since 1984 affected your functioning as a teacher in the public schools?

How have these educational reforms affected the functioning of the students you teach?

Compare your feelings about your role as a teacher prior to 1984 with your feelings about your role as a teacher today.

In general, what has been the overall effect of the legislated school reforms?

Rate each item to indicate your perception of it prior to 1984 and today. Circle the ratings for prior to 1984 in the left-hand column; for today in the right-hand column.
Use this scale: VH = Very High H = High M = Moderate L = Low VL = Very Low

PRIOR TO 1984						TODAY				
VH	H	M	L	VL	Image of self as productive	VH	H	M	L	VL
VH	H	M	L	VL	Student stress	VH	H	M	L	VL
VH	H	M	L	VL	Expectations for students	VH	H	M	L	VL
VH	H	M	L	VL	Job satisfaction	VH	H	M	L	VL
VH	H	M	L	VL	Emotional support in work setting	VH	H	M	L	VL
VH	H	M	L	VL	Personal job-related stress	VH	H	M	L	VL
VH	H	M	L	VL	Attainment of learning goals for students	VH	H	M	L	VL

PLEASE TURN THE PAGE AND COMPLETE THE OTHER SIDE

6. Educational reforms mandated by Texas legislation contained several elements which are listed below. In the left-hand column, indicate your opinion of the degree to which, in theory, each element should be beneficial in improving the effectiveness of schools. In the right-hand column, please indicate the degree to which the element as implemented in your school has been effective in improving your school. Use this scale:

VB = Very Beneficial B = Beneficial N = No Change H = Harmful VH = Very Harmful

EFFECTIVENESS IN THEORY		EFFECTIVENESS AS IMPLEMENTED
VB B N H VH	Ruling that 5 days absent = failure	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Reduction of class size	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Increased number of days per year for testing	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Frequent numerical grade reports	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Essential elements in curriculum	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Homogeneous pacing of instruction	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	State test of student achievement	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Career ladder for teachers	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Remedial tutoring	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Test scores used for instructional decisions	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Test scores used for comparison of schools	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	TECAT testing	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Evaluative observation of classroom teaching	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	No-pass no-play rule	VB B N H VH
VB B N H VH	Teacher input to educational decision-making	VB B N H VH

7. We would like your opinion as to how educational reform could be made more effective and more beneficial. We have listed some aspects of implementation. In the left-hand column tell us how adequately each aspect has been implemented in the current educational reform efforts. In the right-hand column, tell us how important is each aspect in making reform more effective. Use these scales:

VW = Very Well
W = Fairly Well
M = Moderately
P = Poorly
VP = Very Poorly

VI - Very Important
I - Important
N - No Opinion
U - Unimportant
VU - Very Unimportant

ADEQUACY OF IMPLEMENTATION		IMPORTANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
VW W M P VP	Administrative equity	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Para-professional aid	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Publicity for successes in education	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Concern for individual differences	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Adequate funding	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Administrator/supervisor support	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Community respect for teachers	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Parental support for student achievement	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Teacher input to implementation decisions	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Educator input to state-level policy	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Team spirit rather than peer competition	VI I N U VU
VW W M P VP	Other: (fill in)_____	VI I N U VU

8. Now circle the aspect in # 7 that is the most important for successful implementation.

END

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